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Food and Home Notes

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Cooking a chuck blade of beef? Use it as Swiss steak or braised steak because it comes from the less tender portion of the beef carcass. Even in the higher grades it should be cooked with moist heat, according to USDA home economists.

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If you're thinking of buying a 300 pound side of beef you can expect about 225 pounds of usable meat cuts--which means about 25 percent cutting loss.

* * *

What is blue-vein mold ripened cheese? It's natural cheese cured by the use of a characteristic mold culture that grows throughout the interior of the cheese to produce the familiar appearance and characteristic flavor.

* * *

If the cheese is marked "mellow"--what does that mean? Mellow is a degree of curing (or ripening) for cheese--usually Cheddar...cured (held at a specific temperature and humidity) longer than mild cheese, but not held as long as for sharp cheese. A moderately sharp flavor results, also called "medium."

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IT'S A FAST, FAST WORLD

-- NOW IT'S AN "INSTANT" RICE

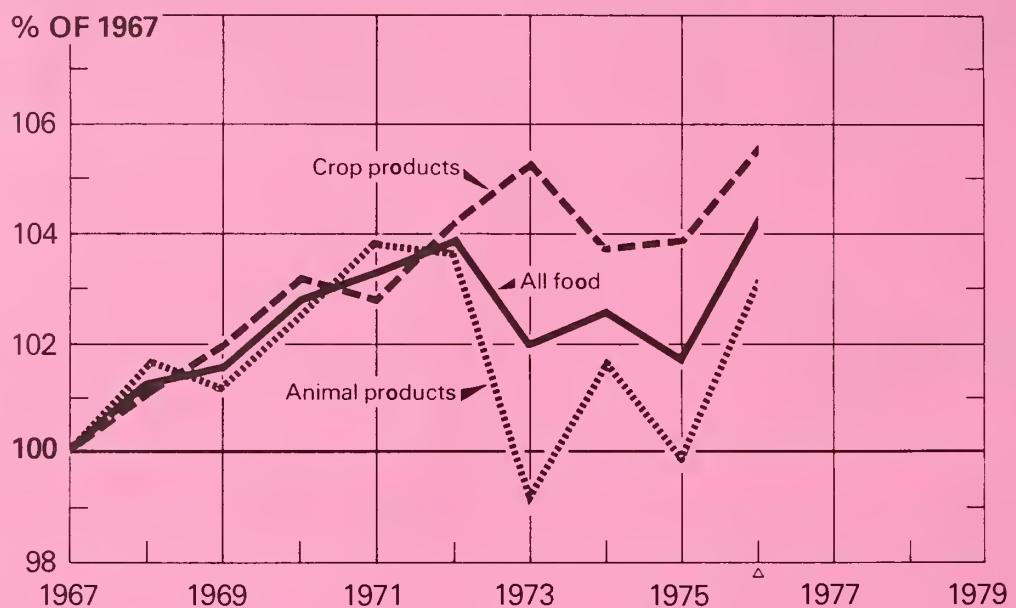
Change the precooking conditions and rice can be made "instant" according to a new process developed by U.S. Department of Agriculture researchers. Apparently, the rice even tastes better...because it is cooked less. Since the drying time is less in this method, there is also a considerable saving in energy.

This new concept which reduces energy use originally was developed by USDA's engineers for drying diced vegetables such as carrots, potatoes or bell peppers. It works with many rice varieties--short or long grain rice--or even wild rice.

Rice consumption in the United States has increased over the past 15 years from approximately 5 pounds per person to about 8 pounds per person. This increase is partly due to the development and use of precooked or quick-cooking methods of preparing rice.

AGRICULTURAL CHARTS

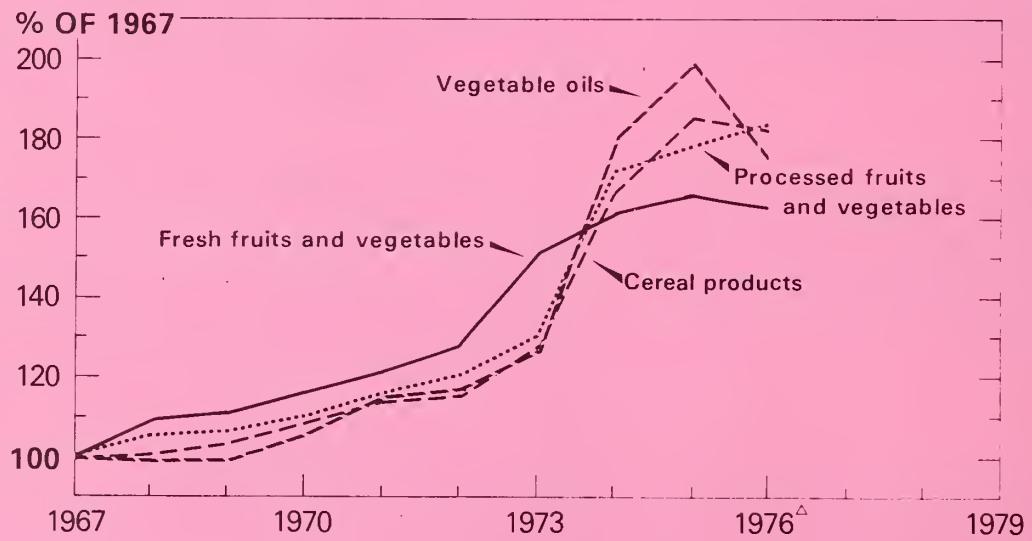
PER CAPITA FOOD CONSUMPTION*



*ITEMS COMBINED IN TERMS OF 1957-59 RETAIL PRICES. △PRELIMINARY.

USDA

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RETAIL PRICES
OF SELECTED CROP PRODUCTS

△ ESTIMATED SOURCE BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS.

USDA

NEG ERS 5275-76 (9)

Prepared by the Economic Research Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
 Slides/prints of these charts are available to the PRESS for reproduction if requested to the Editor of Food and Home Notes.

BOOKLET REVISED

.....ON USDA GRADES IN BUYING FOOD

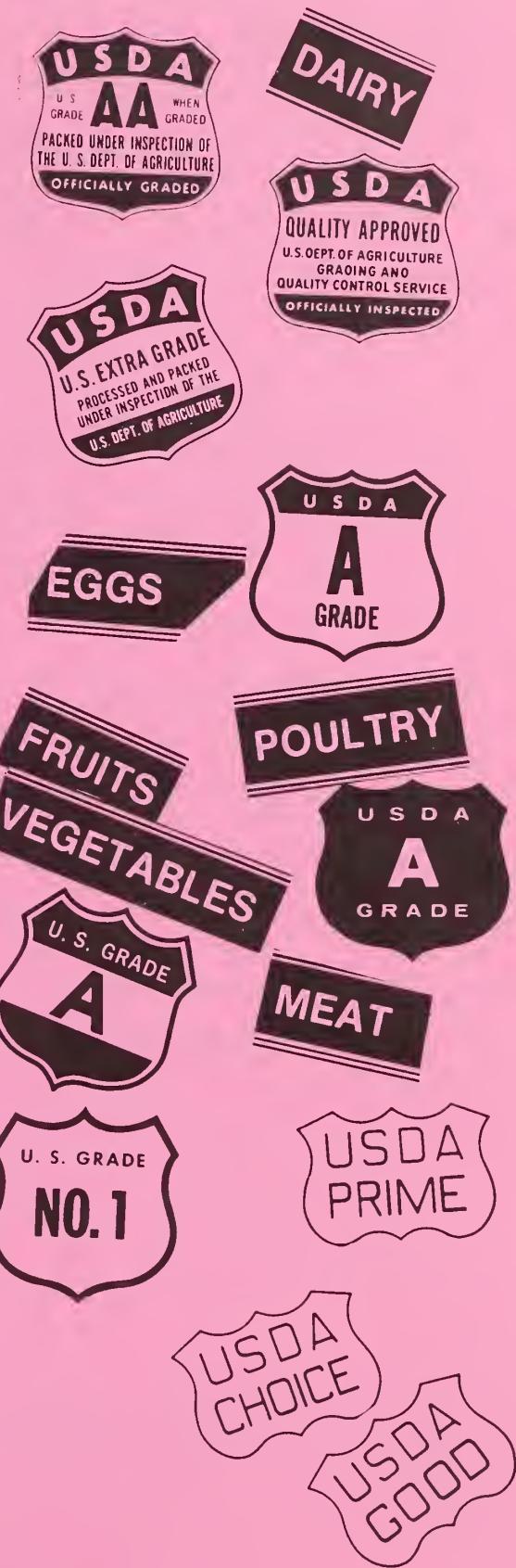
If it's "Quality approved" with a USDA stamp on it...What does it mean? This is a relatively new shield...and may be used on such products as cottage cheese, pasteurized processed cheese and sour cream. It means the product is of good quality and that it was manufactured in a clean plant under the supervision of a USDA grader. At present, however, only a few plants are using this mark on their products.

What foods usually carry grade marks?

Beef, veal, lamb, turkeys, eggs and butter usually carry grade marks -- but remember, grading food is a voluntary compliance, not mandatory. Some cheese, instant nonfat dry milk, jams, jellies, frozen concentrated orange juice and canned, frozen and fresh fruits and vegetables are also labeled by grade.

However, many good foods do not carry the USDA grade.

What's the difference between Grade A and Grade AA butter? It's a matter of the delicate sweet flavor in the latter,



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BOOKLET REVISED (Con't.)

but U.S. Grade A is almost as good and usually sells for a lower price.

Eggs, too, are frequently graded. The USDA grade shield for eggs may be found on the carton. U.S. Grade AA eggs, top quality -- have whites that are thick, yolks that are firm and practically free from defects and clean, unbroken shells.

What are grade B eggs used for? Usually for general cooking and baking. Eggs that are officially graded are checked for size, but the size has nothing to do with the quality. A dozen Extra large eggs must weigh at least 27 ounces and a dozen large eggs at least 24 ounces. Medium eggs must weigh at least 21 ounces per dozen.

U.S. choice is the mark you are most likely to see on meat. Main grades are prime, choice, and good -- with other lower grades, but you seldom see them marked on the meat. Two things are important in buying and cooking beef -- the quality grade and the cut. Beef grades indicate how tender most cuts will be -- and how juicy and flavorful the meat will be.

Don't expect calf meat to be as flavorful or as juicy as mature beef. But -- check the grades and see if they don't prove to be useful in your buying habits.

Single free copies of "How to Use USDA Grades in Buying Foods" --G-196 is available from the Office of Communication, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

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